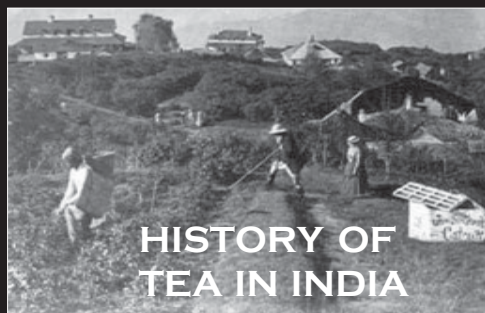
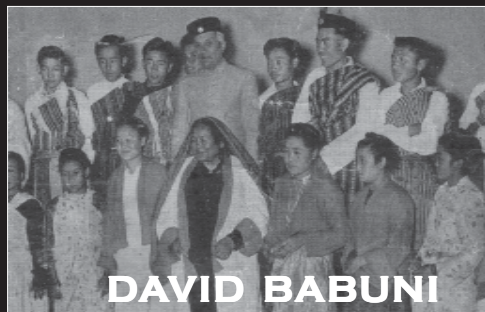


# Himalayan Times

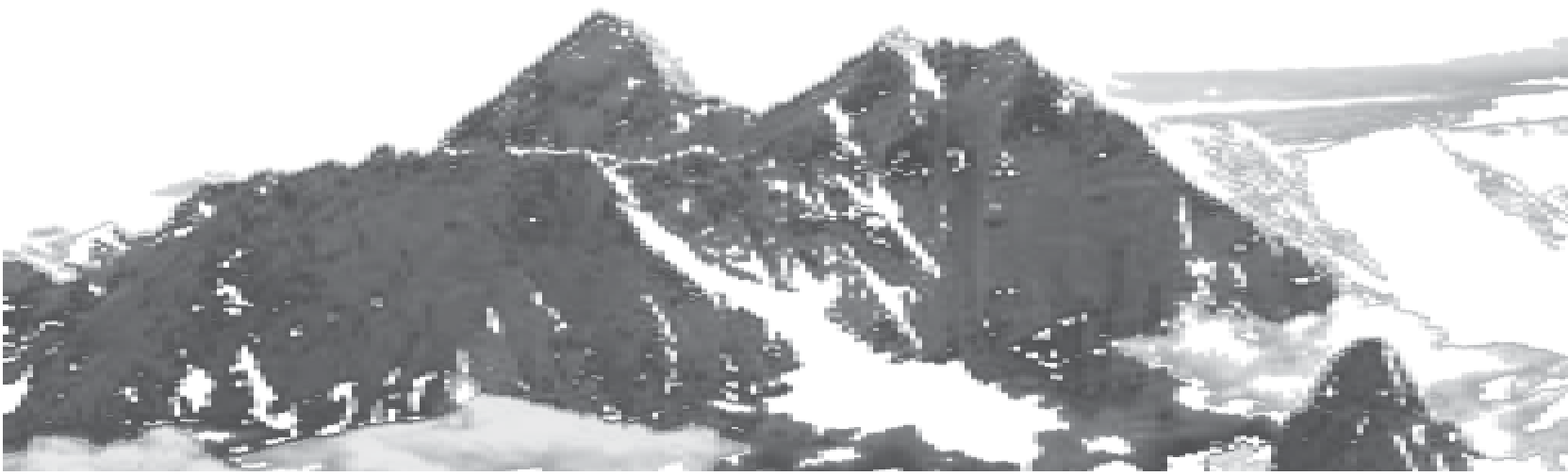
The voice of the Darjeeling Hills

Kalimpong \*Vol. 3 • Issue 4 February 2007 Rs. 6/-



## deodhunga

**THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN THE WORLD**



# EDITORIAL

'One India' is the punch line of the advertisement on air for BSNL. Probably it wants the gullible consumers to believe that the BSNL is the only national telecom company which has its presence in all four corners of the country. Yes, it is true when they claim to be the biggest telecom operators in the country and one of the biggest in the world. But it is also a fact that it is one of the biggest and fattest white elephants of the Indian Economy. Whether they agree or not, the fact is that BSNL is one large crowd of people for whom efficiency means how efficiently consumers can be harassed.

Enough has already been said, told, written and debated about the poor connectivity in the network of BSNL. Reactions over the bad connectivity have turned from simple complaining, to frustration, to anger, to – now humour!!! BSNL consumer have resigned to their fate and now find humour in the entire affair by rechristening BSNL (actually Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd) to "*Bhool Saybhi Nahi Lagta*" (meaning it does not connect even by mistake). But this piece is not about poor connectivity or inflated bills or the winding lines outside the Bill Payment counters or about the *Babus* behind the counters. It is about the fact that BSNL Fixed line users under the Siliguri Telecom District have gone without a proper phone directory since the last half a decade. The last directory released by BSNL for the Siliguri Telecom District, was way back in 2002 which was corrected upto June 2001. The number of fixed line users has gone up many folds since then, the number of exchanges even in a place like Kalimpong, has gone up by half a dozen, but BSNL still does not think it fit to publish an up to date directory. The situation is such that if a telephone user wants to know of any land phone number, then he/she in most probability has to make at least two-three phone calls to common friends to find out the telephone numbers he/she is looking for. All because BSNL has not published an up to date phone directory in the last five years. Whether there is a genuine technical problem regarding the publication or whether it is lack of funds or whether it is a simple case of negligence on the part of the BSNL is none of the consumer's headache. As far as the consumer is concerned it has paid in anticipation of the services BSNL is in business for and in its absence the consumer feels cheated. No wonder BSNL is loosing its clients faster than deers leaving a burning meadow.

DO YOU HAVE ANY THING THAT  
YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH THE  
REST OF  
DARJEELING???

HAVE YOUR SAY AT **YOUR PAGE**

[himalayantimes@rediffmail.com](mailto:himalayantimes@rediffmail.com)

Dear Sir,

The story on the Mongolian Community in Kalimpong written by you and printed in your previous issue, was a real eye opener for people like us who were born after the trade route to Tibet through Kalimpong, was shutdown.

The stories which we have heard from our parents and the information gathered from whatever few articles that we have read on the various aspects of life during the "Tibet Trade" times, seems to suggest and point to the fact that Kalimpong at that time was a very vibrant society which excelled not just in the economical field but also in the intellectual one.

It probably will not be wrong to suggest that the 1940's & 1950's were the golden age in the history of Kalimpong. Sadly with the type of Political and Administrative set-up that we have in place in the present times, indications are clear that the golden age is gone and finished and will never ever come back.

Many thanks to them that we and our future generations are destined to live in the "dark ages" rather than the 'golden age'.

G.M. Suberi  
Dungra Busty  
Kalimpong

Dear Sir,

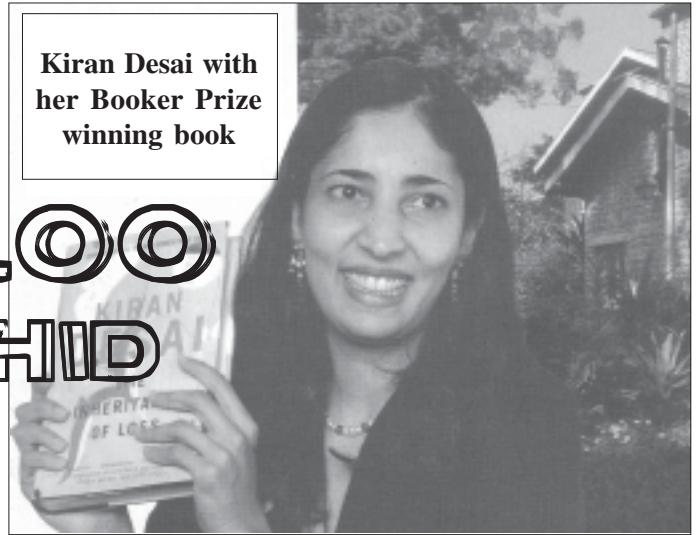
We in Darjeeling have always felt the need for a newspaper/periodical which would address the numerous problems of the Darjeeling Hills, which would highlight our glorious past and which would be our (and only our) platform to fight against all the wrongs in our beloved Hills.

With Nations dailies like Telegraph and Statesman now coming out from Siliguri and a host of Nepali papers being published from the same place, the fight to call themselves local dailies is very much on but the fact is that the fight amongst all these "local dailies" is only for raking up the lucrative local advertisements and increasing their readership rather than to address local issues. Relegating news from North Bengal and Sikkim to the back pages while highlighting the antics of people like Mamta Banerjee and her ilk, just goes to show the low esteem which Main stream Bengal looks at us and how down in the priority list Darjeeling is for them.

With Himalayan Times now becoming a regional magazine, we can hope that it acts as that platform atop which Darjeeling Hills can voice its concerns, discuss its problems, showcase its heritage and arrive at solutions.

Mrs Sunanda Tiwari  
Ghoom

Kiran Desai with  
her Booker Prize  
winning book



# HULLABALOO IN THE ORCHID GARDEN

By Sandip C. Jain

It certainly is in no way any inheritance of loss for her- infact if you consider the above thirty-five lakhs in Indian currency that she pocketed as prize money for winning the Man Booker Prize and the other several millions that her book is making for her being on top of the Indian Best Sellers list, its more of a case of that type of inheritance which a twenty something trophy wife, of a stinking rich eighty something husband, receives on his death. A more appropriate title of Kiran Desai's book would have been "Inheritance of a Windfall".

While no one should have any objection to this "windfall" that she "inherited", on the basis of the literary merits of the book, we in Kalimpong should and do strongly condemn and object to the falsities on which the plot of the book is built on. Ok, we agree, and are the first ones to do so, that not everything that happened during the Gorkhaland agitations for a separate state (within India) was right. There is no way one can justify the meaningless violence, the loss of so many innocent lives and the burning down of government property, but then one just cannot rubbish an entire society and a mass uprising, just because it makes a good plot for a book.

Desai, probably was just thirteen-fourteen at the time the agitation was at its peak (which makes her too young to actually make any rational judgment of what was going on around her) and probably was not even here in Kalimpong during those days ( which again impairs her judgment making capacity), to actually know the correct ground situation prevailing during those troubled days. Her ignorance of ground realities is reflected in a big way as one actually goes through the book that she has written. Her branding the agitation as communal, her implying that the Bengalese population in Kalimpong was virtually treated as out-castes, her labeling the most reputed tailoring house in Kalimpong as "deaf", her pointed suggestion that the very revered Father Booty was a homosexual who ogled at Buddhist monks and her describing the colour of sunset on Kanchenjunga as "pornographic pink" , are some examples of her insensitivity to local issues. (By the way how did Desai know how or what pornographic pink looked like at a time when she was barely into her teens???? )

Miss Desai, do you realize or do you even know that Kanchenjunga is the most revered object of worship for the indigenous Lepchas of the region?? No responsible person, specially someone of your lineage, is expected to describe someone else's object of worship by comparing it with anything that, even remotely, has something to do with pornography!!

Miss Desai is lucky that it is Kalimpong, its people and its history that she chose to rubbish. Had she chosen to do the same for any other place, there would have been a massive "hullabaloo" against her and her book. She is lucky that she chose Kalimpong which is a place which just does not react. After all Kalimpong has become something like a long dead, rotting tree stump, where every dog(or bitch) can come and relieve himself or herself and go away contended, without an iota of protest by the tree stump.

You owe us an apology Kiran and it won't cost you a single penny out of the millions that you have already made at our expense. ☐

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Mr. N.P.Dikshit

# HIMALAYAN HAZARD

## *Focus of an earthquake lies hidden beneath Darjeeling, says Abdul Matin*

The devastating earthquake rocking India's northwestern border region focuses our attention to another danger zone in the east: Darjeeling.

Earthquake, one of nature's worst furies, arise due to some adjustments in the earth's outer shell called lithosphere. A proper understanding of those processes occurring underneath our feet is necessary if we are to avoid unimaginable losses of life and property.

In 2001, Professors Roger Bilham, Vinod K. Gaur and Peter Molnar pointed out in their research paper in the journal Science ('Himalayan Seismic Hazard') that "several lines of evidence show that one or more great earthquakes may be overdue in a large fraction of the Himalayas, threatening millions of people in that region."

According to them, six regions in the Himalayas have the potential to generate earthquake of a magnitude greater than 8. One of these high-risk zones lies in the Darjeeling range of the Himalayas. There is a possibility that parts of the Himalayas that have not been ruptured in major earthquakes for the last 500 to 700 years will be associated with slip on faults (fractured surfaces on which earthquakes originate) exceeding 10 meters.

The Darjeeling-Sikkim range is seismically dangerous because it has not experienced any big earthquake in recorded history. Studies conducted for the past several years by a team from the Centre for Mathematical Modelling and Computer Simulation of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Centre (CSIR) suggest that strains are gradually accumulating in this region. According to Prof. Gaur, leader of the team, the area is ripe for a big earthquake. There is a possibility that a large amount of stored strain energy might be released, creating a devastating earthquake. The structure of the Himalayas is characterised by fold-and-thrust belts containing a number of large faults separating gigantic sheets of rock masses. The sheets move southward because of the collisional effects of the Indian and Eurasian plates. The sheets move periodically, and during these movements accumulated strains are released in the form of earthquakes.

The youngest fault in the Himalayan fold- and thrust belts, called the Main Frontal Thrust (MFT), which extends into the Indo-Gangetic plains in front of the Himalayas, is also likely to be very active seismically. Any substantial movement along this fault will release tremendous energy in the form of seismic waves.

Apart from the MFT, the other seismically active zones in front of the mountain range are the Malda-Kishanganj Fault, Katihar-Nail-phamari fault, Jangipur-Gaibanda Fault, Tista Fault, Dhubri Fault and a host of other unnamed faults between Kishanganj in the west and Alipurduar in the east. Some of these faults have become active only in recent times.

An earthquake in the southern part of Darjeeling-Sikkim will wreak a havoc, for it has one of the highest population densities in the world. The worst affected areas will be Siliguri, Jalpaiguri, Cooch Behar and Alipurduar, not only because of their locations, but also due to the subsurface material on which these towns rest. An earthquake of magnitude of 7 or more in the area would make the alluvium and sand temporarily 'liquefied'. Buildings will topple or collapse automatically.

We should be prepared to tackle the problem of a big earthquake in the Darjeeling-Sikkim range. What is needed is a detailed plan of action. The government, town planners, and other civic bodies should chalk out strategies keeping in mind the seismicity of the area. We must not delay in formulating a strict code in construction of buildings and high-rise structures. Development of new townships should follow the guidelines set by the Indian Bureau of Standards. Steps should also be taken to strengthen the existing vital structures and buildings such as schools, hospitals etc in the seismically active areas. □

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***“During an aerial survey of the Pirpanjal terrain, in 1988, Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah saw the wanton denudation of a compartment at Sangarwani, in Pulwama-Pakharpora belt of south-west Kashmir. He saw wood-poachers felling the green coniferous trees in broad daylight. Without losing a moment, he took the extreme step by way of ordering the premature retirement of senior Forest officials. Several officers were fired on account of their negligence and failure to strike on timber-smugglers. His drastic measure evoked widespread appreciation” The statement was reported by the Pioneer, leading news daily, published from Chandigarh, sometimes in 2000.***

Human beings along with their ambitious development matrixes are posing serious threats to their own livelihood, destroying the ecological bases that sustain them. The forests are being exploited both legally and illegally for their timber without realising that trees are only secondarily producers of timber. Their primary function is to promote rain, absorb moisture and recharge ground water. The economic benefits of forests, in terms of climate control, pollution abatement, and wildlife maintenance, have rarely been calculated. The economic importance of non-timber forest products is also increasing. The forest is also vital as a watershed. Because of the thick humus layer, loose soil, and soil-retaining powers of the trees' long roots, forests are vitally important for preserving adequate water supplies. Almost all water ultimately feeds from Forest Rivers and lakes and from forest-derived water tables. In addition, the forest provides recreation and aesthetic renewal for people, and irreplaceable supplies of oxygen and soil nutrients.

### **Dwindling Forest Cover in Darjeeling Hills**

Forests of Darjeeling Hills are in a dire need of similar aerial survey as highlighted above. Our forest resource has been degrading and depleting with time. There is a huge gap between the area under forest and actual forest cover in the region. This gap is rapidly increasing with time. Further, even within a particular area covered with forest the density of trees has been falling on a massive scale since the last 15-20 years. It is believed Darjeeling Hills today has less than 30 per cent of its land under forest cover, strictly speaking. However, as per the records of Forest Department, over 36 per cent of its land is under forest cover. Mention should be made here that as per government of India's recommendation 60 per cent of the geographical area of hills and mountains should be covered with forest.



### **Factors of Forest Degradation**

There are a number of factors working in tandem towards the degradation of our forest resource. Two important factors may briefly be discussed here.

**First**, forests in Darjeeling Hills are under the overall control and maintenance of two administrative entities. They are the Department of Forest, West Bengal and Darjeeling Gorkha Hill council. Management of about 70 sq kms protected forests and unclassified forests are with the executive power of DGHC while reserved forests are under the control of forest department of the state. Such divisions of forest responsibility in Darjeeling Hills have not proved beneficial to our forest resource over the years. The forest protectors have failed to coordinate between themselves and as a consequence proved futile in protecting and sustainably managing our forests.

**Secondly**, if we visit forest areas across

the countryside it will not be difficult for us to observe the difference in the density of forest cover at present times and about two decades ago. There was time when these forests were so dense that it was scary for a human to travel alone. Today these forests have been witnessing massive selective timber smuggling. A visit to a number of villages and discussion with the villagers involved in this illegal but thriving business provides us much light about the whole process that need to be briefly noted here: Majority of the rural timber smugglers are semi-literate but there are often educated unemployed youths too involved in the business. They understand that they are not doing justice to their forest resource and associated environs but they say they have no other economic options. Unemployment and threatened livelihood security are cited to be the principal causes of forcing the villagers to get involved in this easy but often risky business. It is ironical to point out here that the villagers confided to this writer that they have been successful in taking the forest guards into confidence

over the years. They bestow the forest guards and sometimes forest officer-s at local levels certain percentage of their illegal earning and it is done. The only hurdle in their 'operation forest' after taking into confidence the forester-s is that they have to operate their entire business cycle in dark at night. The semi-processed as well as completely processed timbers are usually supplied to the already fixed client-s in urban locations comprising of urban middle class, in majority of cases. This means, to a large extent, wooden furniture and other associated family items in our urban lower and middle class households are made up of illegally supplied teaks and such other economically valuable species supplied at much lesser rate than what is prevalent in the market.

### **JFM in Darjeeling Himalaya**

It is important to highlight here that Joint Forest Management (JFM) scheme was initiated in 1990-91 in Darjeeling Hills. On the paper today, there are over 73 Forest Protection Committees functioning in



Darjeeling hills covering an area of over 19406 ha. This constitutes more than 30 per cent of the total forest area in the region. As the largest sub-division of hills, Kalimpong has the largest number of FPCs under its fold. This writer was surprised to learn, after his informal discussion with the villagers, that an ordinary rural soul does not even know what 'Joint Forest Management (JFM)' exactly is let alone the noble principles and rural/grass root empowerment that it carries along with it. This means there is an appreciable gap between the figures as highlighted in our official records (see the tables) and actual implementation of the Programme. If the average rural masses do not have even heard about JFM where is the question of its successful implementation in Darjeeling Hills?

Table no. 1 Division Wise Forest Area in Darjeeling Hills  
(Sq Kms)

Region	Sub-division	Forest Area
Total		
	Kurseong	338
	Darjeeling	310
	Kalimpong	556

Table no. 2 Division Wise Distribution of Forest Protection Committees in Darjeeling Hills

Forest Division	Number of FPCs	Area Protected (ha)
Total No of Members		Forest Land Per FPC
Member		
Kurseong	10	1169
848	1.38	
Kalimpong	25	6515
798	8.16	
Darjeeling	16	2647
631	4.19	

Source for both the tables: State Report on West Bengal Forest, 1995 as quoted in Khawas, Vimal, 2003, Joint forest management in India with special reference to Darjeeling Himalaya, [www.mtnforum.org](http://www.mtnforum.org)

Ironically, one of the senior forest officials in the region posted a note to People's Commission on Environment and Development India's website in the 1990s highlighting the success of JFM in Darjeeling Hills. It may be relevant to quote a passage from his note:

'Before formally registering FPCs, motivation camps are held to explain to the local people the basic concepts of the JFM scheme and the role of FPCs. The point that was

sought to be driven home is that ecological restoration of denuded forests is linked to their economic well-being. Besides training, a host of support activities aimed at providing economic security to the people are also undertaken. They include eco-development works like construction of new village roads, culverts, ponds, ring wells, school buildings, etc. and the repair of old ones. Vocational support and training in bee-keeping, mushroom growing, pisciculture, and floriculture are also imparted. Inter-cultivation of fodder grasses, medicinal and other economically useful plants are allowed between main tree species in plantations. All such activities are community-oriented and eco-friendly in nature. Training in knitting and sewing are organised to improve the women's economic status. Employment by the Forest Department is a part of the income generation programme. As support activities, the laboratories for production of mushroom spawn have been set up in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Sukna. They cater to the needs of mushroom growers. Fire-wood and small timber centres have been set up in different parts of Darjeeling district to meet the local people's needs'.

Elsewhere in the note, he also writes, 'The reduction in illicit felling and theft of forest produce can be attributed to the joint efforts of the staff of the division and the forest protection committees'. Nothing of the sort, as noted in the quoted passage above has ever happened or happening in Darjeeling Hills, at least not in the villages that this writer visited.

It is high time that we internalise the fact that Darjeeling Hills with its rich and unique biological diversity is facing a deep crisis. It is being relentlessly denuded of its rich forest cover for which we all are responsible. Starting from mis-coordination between the protecting institutions followed by lethargy and highhandedness among the forest professionals, down to opportunistic attitude of a section of villager-s, not to talk of prevailing corruptions, have over the years inflicted large scale destruction to our forest resource, beyond the naturally rejuvenating capacity of forest ecology. The impacts of such onslaught are in front of us to experience: our natural springs and small streams (the only sources of drinking and domestic water) are rapidly drying up; the occurrence, frequency and intensity of landslides and flashfloods have increased; the ratio of barren and wasteland is increasing; monsoon has been showing us its fluctuating behaviour; and there is a variation in temperature in recent years; to name only the few. Forests of Darjeeling Hills must be protected from further damage from human depredation. They have to be rejuvenated so that their past wounds are healed. Considerable study and work need to be done towards this end. □

Prof. D.C.Roy

**DAVID BABUNI****or AZEM REBEKA NAMCHU****( 1884—1958 )****A Giant Lady in a mans world**

**A**zem Rebeca Namchu is popularly known as David Babuni in Kalimpong. Originally, she was from Sitong busty under Kurseong subdivision. Her grand father was the head Lama of Sitong Gumba. She died in Kalimpong on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1958 at the age of 74.

At the age of 14, Azem got married with Mr. David Chandra Mohon, a 60 years old widower and a tea plantation manager of Kurseong. He was a Christian and originally hailed from Gaya, Bihar. His known

circle called him 'David Babu' and thereby his wife was popularized as 'David Babuni' (Babuni is the feminine gender of Babu in Nepali). Even today she can only be recognized as David Babuni and very few can identify her by her birth name—Azem Rebeca Namchu.

David Chandra Mohon Babu was very close to Rev. William Macfarlane (1840-1887), one of the Scottish Missionaries and they worked together among the orphan children at Gaya, Bihar. Later on in June 1870, Rev. Macfarlane came to Darjeeling to start his new mission field. He extended his mission work to Mangwa, Sitong, Sunathong, Pemling, Nimbong, Pedong, Bombusty, Chibbo, Loley, Pakong, Munzong, and other places in the hilly region of Darjeeling. While



David Babuni with Prime Minister Nehru

visiting along with Rev. Macfarlane, David Mohon might have met Azem Rebeca at Sitong and ultimately got married to her. David Mohon later left his job as plantation manager and joined as an assistant teacher in Scottish Universities Mission Institute in Kalimpong which was established in 1887. He was a close associate of Rev Macfarlane and devoted his time and energy for the spread of gospel among the people of the region. David Mohon was one of the pioneers who took active part in the construction of the Church. He was not only a rich man but a devoted personality for the cause of Christianity. He voluntarily shared some burdens of the Church and used to pay monthly salary etc. for the bell man of the Church. After his death, David Babuni continued to bear some such expenses until her death although her sources of income had reduced drastically.

Her sources of income limited to the collection of rent from landed properties and some earnings from agricultural field. After eight years of conjugal life, Babuni lost her husband probably in the year 1906. They were issueless but Babuni was a dowager and inherited Kanchenjunga Koti and all other landed properties of David Mohon. Presently the Koti is looked

after and inherited by Kaiser Namchu, son of Dathap Namchu, only brother of David Babuni.

After the death of David Mohon, the missionaries appointed and deputed one Yanzung Lepcha, a lady from Mangwa Busty, Peshok to look after Babuni. Yanzung became the helper, guide and all time follower of Babuni till her death. Yanzung brought other members of her family from Mangwa and stayed with Babuni and was later given a plots of land at 9<sup>th</sup> Mile, Kalimpong for residential purposes. This plot of land was later sold to Rockvale Academy by her descendants.

David Babuni was a tall lady and had a huge physical figure with more than one quintal of weight. Her complexion was not as fair as the common Lepchas but was a bit blackish. It is said that due to



her weight the vehicle flattened on the other side of Rupi Baze, the driver of the old car which Babuni normally used. The space of the vehicle was so narrow for her that it could not accommodate her legs properly and for that purpose Mangale Lepcha (renamed as Hawalder by Babuni) was employed who always accompanied her and used to place her legs properly in the vehicle. Originally Babuni was a Buddhist but after her marriage converted into Christianity.

David Babuni had no formal school education but she was fluent in four languages—Lepcha, Nepali, Bengali and Hindi. She could not speak English properly but language never became a barrier for her to associate with the Europeans. Her close circle of association was with the European families of Rev. J.A.Graham, Mr. Macdonald, Dr.Orling of Kalimpong. She was very close to the Bengali families located in Kalimpong like Justice S.R.Das, Mr Das Gupta, SDO, P.C.Biswas, Dr Nag and others. She used to meet Rabindra Nath Tagore when he visited Kalimpong and stayed at Gouripur House during 1940's. She used to communicate in Hindi with the Europeans, in Bangla with the Bengalees and in Nepali with the local people. She was well versed in Lepcha language and preferred to communicate in her mother tongue with her fellow tribe members.

All top officials and dignitaries who were posted or visited Kalimpong during both British and Independent India had close contact with David Babuni. Her hobby was to invite them at parties. She was a good cook and was expert in both continental and local dishes. It is told that Babuni collected fund for Second World War by running food stall and selling Nepali dishes during the Mela organized in the month of December each year. In 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India accompanied by his daughter, Smt Indira Gandhi and Krishna Menon, Defence Minister visited Kalimpong and stayed at Sri

Sadan, the present SDO bungalow. Babuni was the head cook assisted by her Hawalder, Yanzung and other family members including her niece Sun Kumari who later married Mr P.R.Pradhan. Later on when Nehru visited Darjeeling, Babuni led a Lepcha cultural team and met him there personally. Lapon Sonam Tshering Lepcha and Nora Namchu both from Bong Busty, were the members of the cultural team and



carry memories of the closeness of Babuni with Pt. Nehru. When she was the President of the Lepcha Association, she always called meetings of the Association at her residence and entertained all the members with lunch or dinner. During her commissionership of Kalimpong Municipality, she used to carry some food articles for the members on all meeting days.

There is no record of joining Babuni joining the freedom struggle but she kept close contact with the top leaders of the country both during the British rule and Independent India. It is learnt that she had very good links with Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu and even with Mahatma Gandhi. Whenever any top officials and Ministers visited Kalimpong during both

pre and post independent period, Babuni used to meet them. She believed that good rapport with the top officials is the only means of bringing something for the Lepchas. She was reliable, trustworthy and confidante to both the British and Indian governments. This shows another very important character of Babuni's life.

David Babuni is perhaps the first Lepcha lady who dedicated her life for the cause of the society in general and for the Lepcha community in particular. When Kalimpong Municipality was formed in the year 1945, Babuni was nominated as its first commissioner along with the other reputed personalities like Dr.B.L.Dixit, Mr M.K.Pradhan (popularly known as Madan Babu), Mr Gouri Shaskar Prasad, Mr D..M.Moktan and others of Kalimpong. Later on she was elected twice as the commissioner and was the first Lepcha lady to act as commissioner for three consecutive terms. But for the fourth term she changed her constituency and fought from ward number nine i.e. the mission compound area wherefrom she lost the election to the Gorkha League candidate Mr. P.R.Pradhan, husband of her niece Sun Kumari. Anyway, she showed her efficiency as a commissioner and undertook a number of developmental works in the municipal area. She was an impartial and dedicated soul for the cause of the people of Kalimpong.

David Babuni devoted her life for the cause and development of the Lepchas of Darjeeling District. Before Independence, in the decade of 1940's a joint organization of the three hill communities of the district was formed by the name NEBULA under the leadership of Mr Laden La, Ex Deputy District Superintendent of Police. In NEBULA, NE represents the Nepalese; BU meant for the Bhutias and LA stands for the Lepchas. After Independence the organization splitted into three separate organizations – Gorkha League

for the Nepalese; Tibetan Association for the Tibetans and Lepcha Association for the Lepchas. David Babuni was closely associated with the formation and development of Lepcha Association in Kalimpong. It is a district level association but because of her its head quarter remained in Kalimpong. David Babuni was one of the leading members of the delegate which met Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India and fought for the recognition of the Association. The

delegate included Lepcha personalities like Ren L.P.T.Rongong, Ren K.P.Tamsang Senior B.C.Simik and others but Babuni was the only lady member of the delegate. In other occasions they met Prafulla Sen and Dr. B.C.Roy, the then Chief Ministers of West Bengal at Calcutta. Along with other demands, the Association was pressuring hard for the inclusion of the Lepchas under the category of Schedule Tribe of India. David Babuni needs to be credited with for the inclusion of the Lepchas under the category of ST since



1951 and the facilities which they continued to receive till date. She was a motherly figure and was easily accessible to all at any time and extended all sorts of help including financial assistance even during the period when she was suffering from financial stringency. Besides her active participation, Babuni helped the Association

financially and it is learnt that she also donated some landed properties to the Association by forming a Trust. All works of the Association was carried out at her rent free wooden house in the town near the present Crown Lodge. She was unanimously elected as the President of the Association in 1950's when Ren K.P.Tamsang was the General Secretary.

A nine member delegate met Sikkim Raja in the early 50's. The delegate included Ren. L.P.T.Rongong, Ren K.P.Tamsang, Ren. G.T.Sitling but David Babuni was the only lady member.

## FUTURE OF KALIMPONG



**Baby Shelja Jain**

Date of birth 26th June 2006

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They stayed in Gangtok over night as guest of the King and met His Highness the next morning. Along with other demands, they prayed humbly for financial help for the Lepcha Association. The King sympathized for the Lepchas of Darjeeling and instantly sanctioned Rupees Ten Thousand . Babuni humbly prayed for more fund with her eight limbs touching the ground. The King requested her to sit properly and increased the amount by another two thousand. Babuni repeated the same thing and this time because of her huge body the King found it difficult to lift her up without sanctioning an extra two thousand. Babuni went on doing the same thing for five times till the total amount reached Twenty thousand. The delegate returned to Kalimpong with joy and thanked Babuni for the simple act of increasing the amount.

Babuni was a born fighter and fought for what she considered to be right. She had no proper school education but she was a very talented lady. It is told that she used to argue with her lawyer, Madan Babu who had to surrender and ultimately bow down and accept her strong arguments. She had good knowledge of engineering also and advised many in constructing their buildings. Monjula Cottage, Usha Cottage, residence of L.D.Kazi, Ex Chief Minister of Sikkim and others still carry her knowledge of construction. She possessed sporting spirit also. She was an active member of organizing committee of Kalimpong Mela which used to organise yearly fair (mela) in the month of December. Babuni with her partner Raja Tobgay used to participate in the 'Three-Leged' race and won the medals several times.

Although it was very unusual during her period but Babuni was a business minded lady having good sense of entrepreneurial ability. It is learnt that she tried to start two factories: soap factory and soda water factory in her residential complex. There were no such factories in Kalimpong but had bright future prospect in



respect of profitability. All her hopes of establishing factories went in vain due to British restriction of using the developmental area, where her residence was located, for any business or industrial purpose. But later she used her entrepreneurial skill for the cause of the Lepchas. She initiated three sources of earnings for the Lepchas: Grain Gola, Dairy Farming and Transport Business. Grain Gola is a sort of cooperative storage where the Lepchas after harvest could store their grains / crops which could be given to others as loan or sold at comparatively low prices. Babuni provided godown for the purpose where one store keeper was engaged to maintain all the records. The Grain Gola scheme of Babuni proved to be beneficial

for the Lepchas and worked for some time.

David Babuni was suffering from breast cancer and had diabetics for quite some time and was under the treatment of her family physician Dr. Boral of Kalimpong. She expired on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1958 at the age of 74. Her huge body was carried from her residence at Kanchenjunga Koti to the graveyard at Mission compound on a truck which was followed by a long procession of all communities of Kalimpong. She was laid to rest alongside her husband, David Chandra Mohan Babu. All irrespective of their caste, creed and religion saluted their beloved leader in sorrow and grief and prayed for the peaceful rest of her soul in the heaven. David Babuni was issueless but she was the mother of all the Lepchas. The mother still remains in the mind of the people of Kalimpong in general and to the Lepchas in particular.□

## Acknowledgements:

- 1.Mr Kaiser Namchu – Nephew. Kanchenjunga Koti, Kalimpong, Darjeeling.
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3. Mr. P.R.Pradhan – Ex Principal, SUMI, Kalimpong, Darjeeling.
4. Mr.N.R.Pradhan – Principal, SUMI School, Kalimpong, Darjeeling.
5. Ren L.S.Tamsang – President, Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association, Kalimpong, Darjeeling
6. Ren P.T.Lepcha –General Secretary, Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association, Kalimpong, Darj.
7. Lapon S.T.Lepcha – Cultural Secretary, Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association, Kalimpong,
8. Renue Nora Namchu—Bong Busty, Kalimpong, Darjeeling.
9. Prof Rinzi Namchu – Kalimpong College, Kalimpong, Darjeeling. .
10. Prof Anila Dorjee – Kalimpong College, Kalimpong, Darjeeling.
11. Mr G.S.Prasad – 9<sup>th</sup> Mile Kalimpong, Darjeeling.



# THEIR WORDS OUR VOCABULARY

By Dr.S.B. Wangyel

There is little that our mother tongue has a vitality of its own. Despite the large number of inflexible grammarians and writers, who never put their heads together to consider new words into our lexicon like the Oxford dictionary editors do, foreign words have a sneaky way of entering into our language, increasing and enriching our vocabulary. Words like computer, microchip, cloning etc. will imperceptibly and undoubtedly enter our vocabulary but these are technical words and we, non-technical people, have no way out but to accept them. However, there are many simple non-technical alien words in our speech which are intimately related to our daily lives. The humble bucket and the key, 'balti' and 'chabi' come to us from the Portuguese, 'balde' and 'chave'. Consider also 'misri cheeni'. Egypt in Nepali is Misra-desh and the original source of supply of this sweet stuff being Egypt it became known as 'misri'. The second word is so close to 'cheeniya' or 'cheena' one is tempted to link it with China and despite the presence of an old Chinese term, 'shi-mi', meaning 'stone honey' the etymology is still obscure. The Sanskrit alternate 'sarkara's likeness with other is really surprising: in Latin it is 'saccharum', in Italian 'zucchero' and 'succhero', in French 'sucre' and in German 'zucker'. The Spanish call it 'azucar', the Portuguese 'asucar', and the Polish 'zுகier'. The Hungarians term it 'zukur' the Russians 'sakhar', the Arabs 'sukkar' and the English 'sugar' and 'saccharine'. Another object of common use is the handkerchief which we call 'roomal'. Here the etymology is not as vague and 'chini' but we have giving it an interesting twist. The word is Persian literally meaning a 'face-rubber' but we chose the cloth for another purpose and for a face-rubber we adopted the Portuguese 'toalha' and baptized it do 'tauliya'. 'Almari' or 'almeera' is a common furniture in every house and this word too came from the Portuguese ('almario') although the French 'armoire' could be a contender too. I have giving preference to the Portuguese because of their closer historical link with India and the abundance of Portuguese words in Hindi and Nepali. The French did not have much influence in India history and therefore could not have shaped or contributed much to our vocabulary.

Before the advent of the decimal system in India, coins were variously designated as 'paise', 'anna', 'sicca', 'mohur' and 'rupee'. Since 'paise', 'anna' and 'rupee' are from Sanskrit we will not consider them foreign but 'sicca' has a story of its own. In 1677 the British struck silver rupees in Bombay and this was followed by others rupee coins. In 1835 new coins called 'sikka' were struck and these weighed more than the other new or the old worn out ones. Since the term 'sikka' was confined only to undivided Bengal it eventually lost out to the more universal rupee or 'rupia'. However, the word found sanctuary in Nepal as 'sukka' but by then it had been relegated to a fourth of a rupee. 'Sikka' incidentally is an Arabic word meaning 'a coined money'. 'Mohur' has also climbed down in prestige for it came to us from the Persian 'muhr' meaning a metallic seal and thence a gold coin. During the days of the British Raj a 'mohur' actually was a gold coin and when they were withdrawn from circulation the term, like the 'sikka' reappeared in Nepal, it too was relegated in value to a half rupiya.

**Dr.S.B. Wangyel's latest book  
"Footprints in the Himalaya"  
is available in all leading book  
stalls in Darjeeling, Kalimpong,  
Gangtok & Siliguri**

DARJEELING

# Himalayan Times

**Eight Page  
Special Section  
On Darjeeling**



# THE SNOWS OF KANCHENJUNGA

garima Rai

As one pictures our town, the crowning glory of the majestic Kanchenjunga naturally comes to mind first. Then a clear blue sky with white tufts of cotton – ball clouds, a generous sun spraying the hills with gold is what we visualize. Sometimes around the Dusshera season (it happens to be one of my favorite times of the year) even the most neglected shrub is that of bright yellow marigolds and the most unattended sound is that of the cicadas, heralding the warmth of October and November. Faces most joyous seem floating around as though in our imagination, a tint of the “pujas” in every gait a sparkle of “Tihar” in every smeary eye. The whole town buzzes with shoppers and weekends find no rest, shopkeepers earn, hankers earn, business flourishes and everyone is happy. Students and office – goers sigh with relief at the prospect of a long untempted holiday. It is the time to spend all that you’ve earned year long. To let your purse loose and to go for “real shopping” (leaving the “windour” aside).

Time for moms to grow real generous and daughters to get real choosy – “who cares for windour shopping now!” Amidst all these there is another buzz around, and this time it is the yearly “Puja season” of the tourists who also have come to loosen their purse strings. So we have the hoteliers, travel agencies, brokers and countless others who revive under these “favorable conditions”. Puja is in the air, season is in the town. So what more? Our town becomes a pulsating microcosm, where there is food, fashion, life, life and more life. All the noise, buzz the endless rattling of the tailor’s machine, the straggling feet of the shoppers, the pedesbiar – clogged streets. The chiming of our “Big Ben”, the whistle of the traffic police and the steam engine, the trenchant hawkers. The sound of the horns. The faint peals of the Mahakal bells, the sea of heads before you all seem like a train engine speeding, huffing and puffing, gasping and straining to meet the final day of Wasai.... and maybe Diwali too.... everyone racing to meet the deadline... a rendezvous set by ourselves with everything that is ours.

But what after all this?...the ant and the cricket fable?...Another dry spell of winter?...Back to daily monotony and crumpled marigolds?

Once again strangers among each other we had, for once, felt as a single community of hill dwellers? Back to another year of strikes, postponed examinations, demonstrations, meetings, feuds, landslides...whether it was my imagination or exceptional vision, but I did see the snows receding in our crowning glory – Kanchenjunga. □



## PARADOX IN MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT

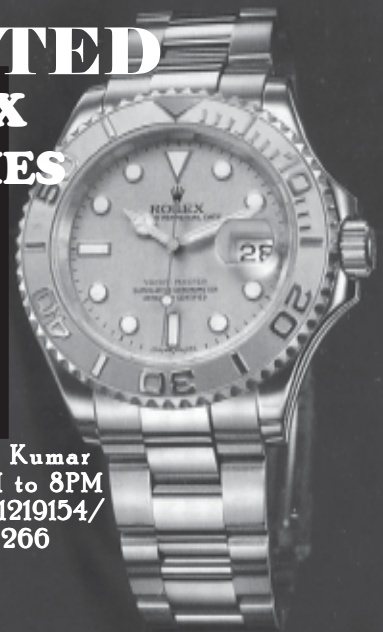
□ G.C.Mandal

Development is the process of broadening the spectrum of opportunities along with asset-base of individuals and households for enhancing the access to opportunities and resources to shape improved livelihood in terms of diverse port-folio of qualitative activities with the ultimate aim at ameliorating the standard of living over sub-sequent time. Although livelihood is a means of earning income in cash or/and in-kinds with a view to live but livelihoods constitute more than just income, since while encompassing both cash and in-kind income, they include the social institutions of kin, family and village, etc., as well as the gender relations and property rights required to support and to sustain a given standard of living. A livelihood connotes the means of gaining a living and a livelihood system encompasses the livelihood capabilities, tangible assets (including the material and the social) such as stores and resources, intangible assets such as claims and access; social institutions and organizations as well as activities and opportunities needed as a means of living. The quality of an activity involved in the livelihood is determined in terms of its modicum of return, risk-involvement and employment generation, etc. Through access to opportunities the resources including individual asset-endowment, social infrastructure and social capital such as social relation, community network, etc. of the individuals and households upon which they have access are converted into activities and thereby income sources to form the livelihood for making a living, *inter alia*. The access to resources not only means the possession right on them, but also implies the capability of utilizing the possessed resources. The access to opportunities depends on the spectrum of opportunities prevailed in the economic environment and the access to resources including social relations. In the economic environment new opportunities can be emerged by the forces like technological breakthrough in the sphere of production, changes in demand pattern, changes in government policy, development of new trade agreement, social infrastructure, etc. Any developmental efforts executed in any particular country or region, along with creation of new opportunity if it is capable of enlarging the access to opportunities as well as resources of the people, then in must bear definite favourable impact on the livelihood and standard of living of the people. On the contrary, as a consequence of such developmental efforts if the resource-base of the individuals and households is curtailed or degraded and thereby their access to resources and opportunities are lessened, then it must have negative repercussions on the livelihood and standard of living of the people. Under such circumstances the development is self-destructive that can be considered as dilemma or paradox of development.

The mountain region is distinct from its counterpart downstream plain region in multifarious dimensions; the most important of them is the nature of resource-base of production. In mountain region the productive activities are mainly based on natural resource which is ecologically more sensitive as compared to that of plain region because of mountain specificities. Every mountain region is pre-occupied with five mountain specificities; namely, inaccessibility, fragility, marginality, niche along with diversity and human adaptive mechanism, among them the first three are treated as constraints of mountain development since they contribute to isolation, distance and thereby hardship of communication, and high transport cost, whereas the later two are considered as positive aspects of mountain development as they create scope or opportunities for mountain development, although they are interlinked with each other so as to maintain balance in the mountain environment. *Albeit*, the environmental conditions in the mountain areas, where natural hazards occur with greater frequency than in the plains,

are relatively fragile. To mitigate such hazards, mountain people developed indigenous ways of managing lands and resources that involve both individual as well as collective effort. But frequent changes in policy place the development of mountain agriculture, the main livelihood of mountain people at risk, resulting in the proliferation of activities that achieve short-term gains but simultaneously push mountain farming systems towards unsustainability. Hence, in mountain regions any developmental efforts have to be undertaken must be consistent with mountain specificities; otherwise they will degrade the natural resource-base. But in mountain regions the developmental efforts so far are pursued to improve the well-being of its people in short span of time are linked with mainstream economies through physical infrastructure and harnessing of mountain niches such as irrigation, hydropower, timber, tourism, etc. in the wake of satiating the hungry thirstiness of plain people, ignoring the basic process of mountain specificities and their interlinkages and hence, such developmental initiatives led to degradation of natural resource-base and ecology, especially in the situation of growing local population growth and endangering land-man ratio. The impact of such environmental changes extends far beyond agriculture, as the resulting losses in food production and environmental quality also restrict the quality of life. The degraded environmental resource base, *inter alia*, has led to the low resource-endowed mountain dwellers to adopt inferior and squished livelihood options in the wake of lessening opportunities and access, an increase in the degree of desperation, acceptance of dependence as a normal basis of survival, and weakening the resilience or capacity to face shock, stress and challenge. Hence, mountain development has confronted of a paradoxical situation. □

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# TEA

## IN INDIA



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DARJEELING

**W**e, in India, have discovered that the tea-tree is indigenous to the Himalayan mountains from China to Ladak, a distance of nearly 2000 miles. We have discovered that we have a favourable climate for the growth of tea, a proper soil for the plant, abundance of labour; and experiments have shown that success will and must attend any attempts to rear the tea plant in the Himalayas. May not the day arrive when we may be independent of the saucy Chinaman, and, instead of sending our ships to Canton for our tea, shall send them to Calcutta for the rich and well-flavoured teas of Assam, Chachar, Darjeeling-Kumaon, and other tea-growing districts, now springing up along the broad front of our splendid mountains?

"The crop of the Assam Tea Company for 1854-55 was 538,094 lb. of good, wholesome, delicious black tea. The crop of 1855-56 was 638,789 lb., of which 301,244 has already been shipped to England; and the crop of 1856-57 is expected to yield 700,000 lb., and this from an infant

plantation! Already do iron boats navigate the narrow streams leading to some of the factories, carrying coal for steam machinery.

Houses with corrugated galvanized iron roofs are starting up, new clearnaces are being made, and new grants of land being applied for and obtained.

"Darjeeling, one of the many hill sanitarium in the Himalaya Mountains, which lies upon the same meridian of longitude as Calcutta, is indebted for the introduction of the tea plant to Dr. A. Campbell, the superintendent of the Sanitarium; the introduction of the plant into Darjeeling was more as a garden experiment, and in order to obtain an evergreen; the experiment was followed by several house proprietors at the place - Dr. Withcombe, Mr. James Grant, of the Civil Service, and Captain Samler, who all followed the example set by Dr. Campbell; but it was to Mr.

Charles Quintin, of the Civil Service, that we are





Century old Rolling Machine

indebted for the tea plant being planted and cultivated with the intention of obtaining a marketable tea from the leaves; it was by his recommendation that Captain Samler cleared some waste ground and sowed tea-seed, which germinated. The Plants, by their healthy and vigorous growth, gave much promise of the experiment succeeding; a company was speedily formed for the cultivation of tea and coffee, the success of which is still in futurity. Several thousand acres of forest land have been cleared, from 2500 feet elevation above the sea to 5900; sixty or seventy acres have been planted, besides six nurseries, in which a ton of seed has been sown this year.

"Mr. R. Fortune, the celebrated authority upon tea and its manufacture, in comparing the climate of the Himalayas with that of China, says that 'although some important differences occur, yet, upon the whole, there is great similarity.' 'Five tons of seed will be in the ground before May, 1857.

"The Government has generously distributed 1600 lb. of tea-seed to the natives of the hills round about the Sanitarium; and, as these men are all inveterate tea-drinkers, we may soon expect all the principal heads of villages will have their own tea plantation, they having taken up the matter in great earnestness and spirit. At present the native tribes in the Himalayas drink tea that is imported from Thibet, which has to perform a land journey of several thousand miles before it reaches their doors. It is a coarse, harsh, black tea, which arrives in blocks or bricks of 6 lb. or 7 lb. weight, and eight inches in length and four inches deep, and is sewn up in raw kidskins, the tea appearing through the stitches at the sides. It costs two shillings a pound; whereas the tea that they will

raise themselves will be drunk on the spot for ninepence to the pound.

"Tea, as at present drank in these mountains, when cooked, is excellent in taste, and highly refreshing to the thirsty traveller or husbandman. It is made after the following extraordinary manner: - Into a large iron cooking-pot full of boiling water, perhaps holding three gallons, a quantity of black tea that has been chopped from the end of a 'Thibet brick' is thrown, together with a little salt, butter, and parched barley meal; this mess, after having been well stirred, is served up in a metal teapot, each partaker of the tea producing his or

her own wooden teacup from the bosom folds of their capacious clothes, and when the cup has been frequently filled, and as rapidly emptied, it is licked clean by the owner and replaced whence it was taken; everyone being supposed to carry a teacup about the person, as a Londoner does a pocket handkerchief; ten or twelve cups full is considered no extraordinary drink for a tea-loving Bhoatia.

"In the accompanying view is shown the Sanitarium at Darjeeling; which gives an excellent idea of the tea mountains, though Darjeeling itself, being at an elevation of 7400 feet, is a little above the plantations. In the distance is the great mountain Deodhunga, sixty miles west of Darjeeling. Close to the spot whence this Sketch was taken, at an elevation of 11,500 feet, wild tea-trees were in blossom, just below the fir forest; Deodhunga, 29,002 feet in height,

being on the left hand of the spectator, and Kunchinginga [Kunchenjunga], 28,176 feet in height, being on the right hand - a wonderful and glorious sight. □

Extracted from the

The Illustrated London News, August 15, 1857





# Deodhunga

## THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN THE WORLD

We add some interesting details of the naming of the Deodhunga Mountain [Mt. Everest]: -

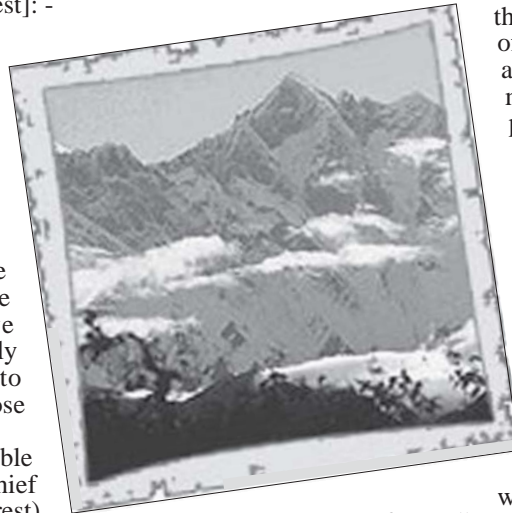
“On the 12th of May last two very interesting communications were read to the Royal Geographical Society of London upon Deodhunga, which mountain Colonel Waugh, in the first paper, refers to as ‘higher than any other hitherto measured mountain in India, and most probably the highest in the whole world.’ Colonel Waugh adds: -

“But here is a mountain, most probably the highest in the world, without any local name that we can discover, or whose native appellation, if it have any, will not very likely be ascertained before we are allowed to penetrate into Nepaul and to approach close to this stupendous snowy mass.

“The Colonel then proposes to name this noble peak of the Himalayas after his respected chief and predecessor in office (Col. George Everest) ‘Mount Everest.’

“The second paper is a contribution from Mr. B.H. Hodgson, dated Darjeeling, Oct. 26, 1856, stating that although he agrees with Colonel Waugh as to the fitness of the name of Mount Everest, and sympathises with the sentiment which gave rise to it, he must add, in justice to the Nepaulese and to himself, who has been so long connected with them, that the mountain in question does not lack a native and ascertained name; that the name is Deodhunga, Holy Hill, or Mons Sacer. To the paper styled ‘Route from Kathmandu to Darjeeling,’ there is appended a ‘Memorandum relative to the Seven Cosis.’ In the latter occurred the following words: - ‘The Bhotia Cosis has its source at the Deodhunga, a vast Himalayan peak situated sixty to seventy miles east of Gosainthan, and which Colonel Waugh conjectures may rival Kunchenging in height.’

In the rude sketch map which accompanied the paper



was set down the position indicated, and that that position tallies with the position of Mount Everest is clear from the words above quoted, since ‘sixty to seventy miles west of Gosainthan’ answers precisely to east longitude 87 deg., Gosainthan being in 86 deg. east longitude. Thus Deodhunga and Mount Everest are both about 100 miles N.E. of Kathmandu; both are midway between Gosainthan and Kangehan; and lastly, both are by their position and by the absence of any like mass of snow in all the intervals between those peaks, identifiable with the so-called Kutighat, or the Great Gate, which annually for half the year is closed by winter upon the eastern highway of Nepaulese commerce and intercourse with Thibet and China. Round the shoulder

of Deodhunga runs, as above intimated, the great eastern highway (the western being round the shoulder of Gosainthan) of the merchants and envoys of Nepaul proceeding to Lassa and Peking; and this passage along the shoulder of the huge snowy mass of Deodhunga is denominated the Kutighat by the Hindoos and the people of the plans of India, as the passage round the huge snowy mass of Gosainthan is denominated by them the Kerung or Western Ghat.

“After the reading of Mr. Hodgson’s paper to the meeting, the President said he was sure all who were present would be delighted if this mountain should for ever retain the name of the distinguished geographer who, following Lambton in the great trigonometrical survey of India, had been the means of carrying on that magnificent operation, which had been conducted to a conclusion by

cont page 23

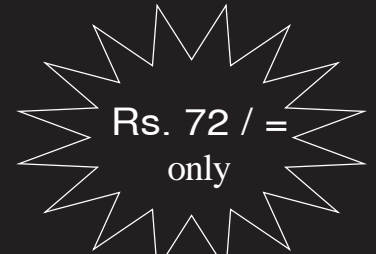


# FACTS ON DARJEELING

Extracted from the popular book  
Fallen Cicadas written by  
Barun Roy & Sanjay Das

In 1949, the Communist party was banned by the Central government and hence, as a result all leaders of the party were arrested. However, some of the eminent leaders of the party were able to run away from Calcutta and hide in Darjeeling in order to escape persecution. Among these leaders were Jyoti Basu, Sushil Chatterjee and Satyen Majumdar who stayed incognito at Singamari. Leaders like Nripen Chakravorthy who later became the Chief Minister of Tripura lived as a tourist at the Munda Khoti locality in Sonada. Almost thirteen years later, during the Indo-Sino War, the Communist Party once again came under the heavy hand of the central Government, as leaders and party workers being to be arrested en-masse under 'Indian Security Act'. Leaders like Ratanlal Brahmam, Anand Pathak, S. P. Lepcha, Bhadrabhabadur Hamal, R. B. Khatiwada, K. s. nabhakta Paudyal, Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Soren Bose, Biren Bose, B. B. Lama, Satyen Majumdar and Rajen Sinha were all arrested from Darjeeling. One eminent leader, H. B. Rai had gone underground for 3 months; however when he came out to take a walk at Chowrasta thinking that things had melted down, was immediately arrested. All these leaders were kept at Alipore, Presidency and Berhampore central Jail. A total of 95 leaders from Darjeeling alone had been arrested.

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TELL US.....

HAPPY QUIZZING.....!!!

### NORTH POINT QUIZ CLUB

Darjeeling is "the Queen of Hills", own small hometown, which is dear to our hearts and will forever be so. This is our inaugural column dedicated entirely to the quiz-lovers of the Hills. Here are ten questions dedicated to our little paradise.

- (1) Name the first Nepali newspaper from Darjeeling?
- (2) The present 'Deshbandhu District Library' was a Chinese Restaurant. What was it called?
- (3) Name the lake in Mirik?
- (4) Who was the first person to get the 'Arjuna Award' from Darjeeling?
- (5) What was the location of Hayden Hill earlier known as?
- (6) Which place was earlier known as 'SELROTI BAZAAR'?
- (7) What is the name of the park which earlier had the statue of Pratap Samsher Jung Bahadur Rana?
- (8) Which is the only purely English Rock Album to come out from Darjeeling till date?
- (9) On whose memory is the fountain in Chowrasta made?
- (10) Darjeeling lies between what latitude and longitude?



- ANSWERS
- (1) Gorkhay Khabar Khagat
  - (2) Charlton
  - (3) Sumendu Dhap.
  - (4) Birendra Singh Thapa for Boxing.
  - (5) Albert Park.
  - (6) Mirik.
  - (7) J.B Thapa Park.
  - (8) First Bite by the band "Forbidden Fruit".
  - (9) Ashley Eden.
  - (10) 26 31' and 27 13' N latitude 87 59 and 88 53' E longitude.

Question can be sent to  
np quiz club@yahoo.co.in.

# RESHAM

## THE BLACK LADY

By Mr. Lal

The only certainty in life is death and yet faced with it, we react with irrational fear and awe. We feel total helplessness and are incapacitated both mentally and physically for a long time. Something like this happened to us very recently. We lost our pet Resham, the mainstay of our lives.

### 3.10.06

48 hrs aren't enough to get over the trauma of losing Resham, our black Cocker Spaniel, who passed away on 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2006. Devastated and anguished by her demise, we thought of these few words to share the realization of the magic bond that exists between animals and humans, the happiness they bring us and the trust they impose in us. This may seem irrelevant to some, after all, why make such a fuss over a pet. But then come over to my side of the fence and you will know why...

### RESHAM'S ILLNESS

Resham was born on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1997 and after eight weeks we brought her home from a friend in Kalimpong. She was jet black with thick, luxurious, shiny coat. Thus appropriately, we called her RESHAM a name she deserved in her own right. The day she arrived, our little children at Good Start School went beserk with excitement. To hold, kiss and cuddle Resham's fat and chubby body was the only desire in their little heads. Learning was out of the window for a while. She was greeted as a little baby. Our carpenter used his ingenuity and made Resham's kennel fit to serve a large breed. It had a large opening in the front with two windows for cross ventilation. A small dunlop mattress with soft linen was spread out in the kennel for the little lady to sleep in. She also had a rare added luxury of a little girl from Class Infant who would often sit in the kennel with Resham in her lap and sing a lullaby in a melodious voice to put the little baby to sleep. In this effort of love, we think the pup also was undergoing a catharsis. Our life steadily changed, we had now something to look forward to.

### RESHAM'S LIFE STYLE

Almost two acres of campus fully fenced, was Resham's territorial domain to run, roam, chase, retrieve, discover and of course, damage the flowers that she enjoyed doing most. It was her outdoor activity. Cockers being gun dogs, are natural hunters. Instinctively they'll chase, retrieve and tear apart things. Accordingly, we had surrounded her with toys and yet, she'd preferred my shoes and socks, the ruination of which showed Resham's relentless energy in the wrong channel and immense joy of destruction! Quarter of everything that she tasted was missing... Oh! she was such a pet!! Cockers are healthy eaters. Resham preferred porridge and eggs for her breakfast, rice mixed with vegetables and

chicken for lunch and chapattis dipped in chicken soup for dinner. A queen's meal. In addition she was given lots of vitamin tabs and calcium for a healthy growth. As time passed and she grew bigger, her meals were cut down to two because she was now a beautiful lady and needed to preserve her perfect look. Her favourite meal was teatime with biscuits.

As she grew she became gorgeous to look at, she was loved and adored by everyone. She had a lovable nature, an easy-going disposition. She was truly an ideal companion at home. Soon her habits also changed. She wouldn't sleep in the kennel any more, instead, on the bed, like us. Putting her head on the pillow and snoring are sights and sounds not to be forgotten, as she slept with me for almost her entire life of 9 glorious years. . Years of love, joy, total communication and sometimes tears.

### RESHAM'S ILLNESS

In 2004 Resham had developed Ascitis, a canine disease of fluid accumulation in the body which, if not treated in time and adequately, could lead to fatality. She was cured but that was the early beginning of an infection that later developed into a life-threatening disease called Pyometra. Puss formation in the uterus. Although the vets in Kalimpong left no stone unturned to save her life, and we owe the world to Dr. D.P. Pandey in particular, for his compassion, concern and commendable effort to save Resham's life-inspite of it all, we lost her on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October in the wee hours of the morning. She died on Naumi during Pujas, if it is any consolation. Our grief was too deep to be consoled. She is buried in a beautiful, secluded place, surrounded by flowers and trees, in a corner of our garden. The lady is asleep, let's not disturb her...

Yet man, to assuage his pain, must act in earnest and indulge in rituals till he understands that relationships never die, they just change form. So now, the children cry for Resham, as do we and all who knew her. They put fresh flowers on her grave each day and bid her the time of the day and night and in this way, they deal with their grief. We all need our own space and mode to deal with grief without interference and this is how life goes on. We know, in time, the wounds will heal but the scars will remain forever. □



# Expression!!!

LAST  
WISH

Namuma Subba

You're the source of light to any planet  
 You're the rain of relief to the scorched earth  
 You're the breath of life to a dying man  
 You're a spark of light in the darkest place  
 My endearment towards you can never end  
 The supreme source of guidance to me  
 The perfect picture of motherliness  
 My guardian angel and my perfect friend  
 You're played every part so well  
 My most precious possession  
 You're the one when I'll always treasure,  
 Till the last minute of my life when my  
 Last mish would be to see you smile.

Life

D. B. Chettri

Life is a gem,  
 It will never come again and again.  
 Be benevolent and hurt none,  
 try to live in fun.  
 Take measured food,  
 this keeps your health good.  
 Love everyone as you love yourself,  
 always be of some one's help.  
 Have faith and wait,  
 god will find you a gate.  
 Life is full of happiness and sorrow,  
 a bright future always wait for you tomorrow.

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# Brain Teasers

With  
Suroj Mani Pradhan



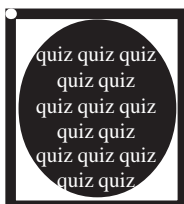
1. How do we know the place "Baira Trisal" today in Siliguri?
2. Who directed the first Nepali movie "Satya Harischandra"?
3. What did the Bedi brothers win recently for their documentary "Cherub of the mist" ?
4. Name the Italian Ornithologist whose cemetery is close to Darjeeling Govt. College ?
5. In which Indian city was the actress, Mala Sinha born?

## Answers to questions in the last issue

1. Sangchen Gumpah
2. Ramesh Sharma
3. Prabin Moktan
4. Bhakta Pariyar
5. Bhim Bahadur Sandoo

Rush in your entries alongwith the coupon below to our office latest by 15th February 2007 to win a sleek Parker Pen.

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# Jumble jumble

W	A	F	S	T	K	U	T	C	H	A	R	Y	W	A	Y	H
E	S	E	R	T	N	M	H	C	L	O	I	A	E	T	K	E
S	R	T	S	M	O	N	T	E	E	R	V	I	O	T	Z	R
T	B	A	L	Y	A	E	O	Q	W	J	K	A	L	O	P	M
R	O	B	E	R	T	S	O	N	P	O	I	O	W	N	B	I
I	T	I	B	N	I	N	N	O	I	E	M	P	L	O	B	T
K	S	B	O	N	G	I	G	O	I	N	K	H	A	N	F	A
S	R	A	N	X	I	N	S	T	A	P	R	A	Y	G	S	G
H	A	A	G	Z	R	L	O	W	E	R	B	R	I	D	L	E
A	P	O	U	P	O	N	O	B	J	I	K	I	U	E	A	M
W	K	A	L	I	Z	P	N	G	A	M	S	J	T	N	I	N
A	V	E	R	T	I	O	G	V	S	T	T	A	O	R	Z	M
L	I	O	N	I	N	S	T	I	G	A	Y	N	S	O	P	A
V	I	C	T	O	R	I	A	R	A	M	P	I	N	G	S	L
P	O	F	U	M	O	T	R	E	D	P	Y	U	R	A	M	L
B	U	Z	Y	R	I	N	K	I	N	G	P	O	N	G	G	M

Hidden in the above jumble are the names of fifteen roads of Darjeeling, Kalimpong & Kurseong. (example: Kutchary) You are required to find them out and send us your correct entry in a separate sheet of paper (please do not tear the above, you may xerox the above if you want).

Please send in your entry with the coupon given below by the 15th February 2007 to win a free lunch for two at Soods Garden Retreat, Kalimpong. The correct answers for the jumble published in the last issue are **M.TAMANG, D.S.GURUNG, D.PAKHRIN, S.GHESHING, DAWA NORBU & DEOPRAKASHRAI**

The winner will be decided by a draw of lots. The names of all those who sent in correct answers for the jumble in the last issue are Ramesh Sharma, Nalon Sada, Tapan Karthak, Suresh Rana, Hamid Gul, Sarita Subba, Suzi Alan, Dinesh Pandey, Ramkumar Sharma, Tara Subba, Durga Sunday, Tshering Yankee, Satish Ghalay, S.C.Pradhan, C.Y.Saini, Bikash Goel, Neelakash Chhetri, Sonam Tshering Karthak, Amber Gurung, Nilesh Thapa, Chandra Kumai, Sulekha Sharma, Reema Pradhan, Arjun Yadav, Beeky Agarwal, Dhanraj Century, Bhawani Sunar, Joy Haldar, Sulav Biswamarma, Dina Golay, Milan Pradhan, Sujata Rai, Rajni Tamang and the lucky winner is -

**Deepika Tamang, 9th Mile, Kalimpong**

Please submit your entry in a plain sheet of paper alongwith this coupon. Please do not tear this page to submit your entry.



**jumble  
coupon**

# वेदवीहपुंगवा

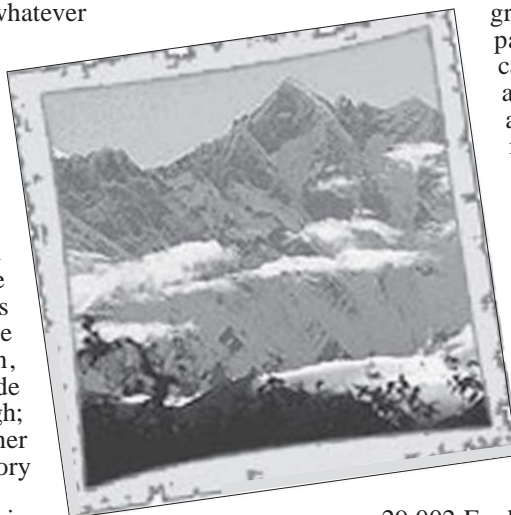
## THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN THE WORLD

...cont 18

Colonel Waugh. A more appropriate name could not be given than that of Mount Everest; and, whatever might be its name in India, he hoped, in England at least, it would always be known by the name Everest. - Mr. Prinsep, F.R.G.S., said it was known that the Himalaya range extended many degrees in length, and that in the whole course of it there were mountains of varying heights. Some of them were the highest in the world. Those which had been really measured overhung the plains of India, and until recently it was supposed that the highest were near the source of the Ganges. Since then, however, the discovery had been made that there was a mountain 28,000 feet high; and the present discovery showed another in Thibet, within the sight of the territory of Nepaul, 29,000 feet high.

"When we come to measure the mountains in which the rivers of China rose we should perhaps find some of them 30,000 feet high. - Colonel Everest than paid a merited tribute to the eminent public services of Col. Waugh, and acknowledged that the compliment paid to him (Major Everest) by proposing that the mountain should bear his name. Yet, he added, there were objections to this naming which did not strike everybody. One was that his name was not pronounceable by a native of India. The name could not be written in either Persian or Hindoo, and the natives could not pronounce it. It would be confounded with that of O'Brien, and the hill people would probably call this mountain Ob'ron. As another instance of the difficulty which the natives experienced in pronouncing English names, he might, among others, mention that the name of the 'Hon. Mr. Cavendish' was pronounced by them 'Humbel go munde.'"

"We have much pleasure in adding that, at the recent anniversary meeting of the Geographical Society, the Victoria or Patron-s Gold Medal was presented to Colonel Waugh -



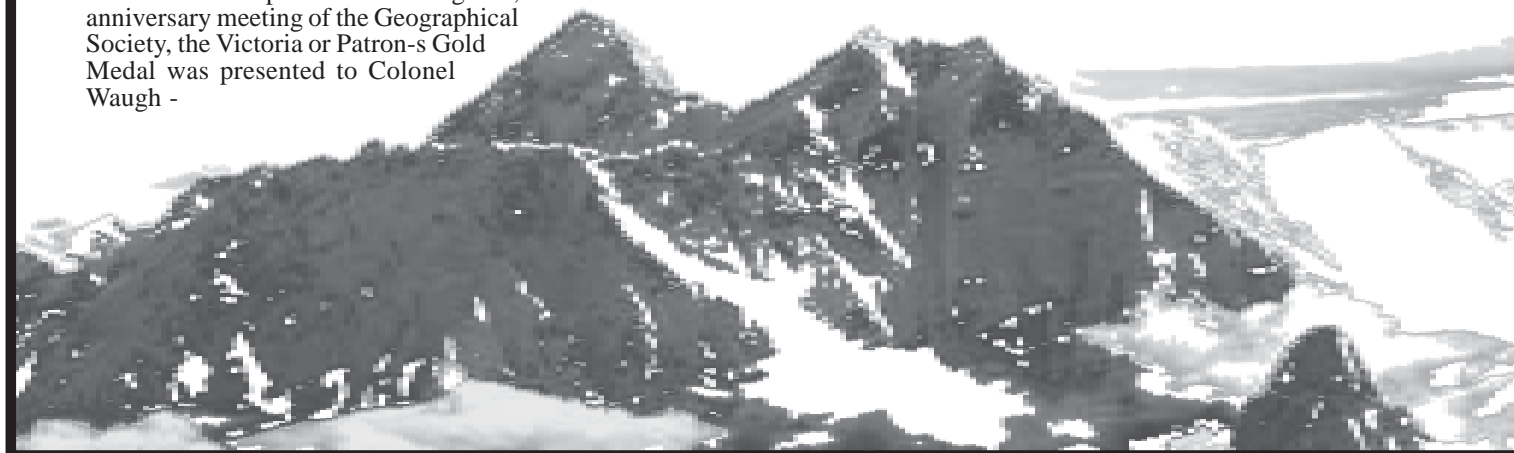
"For his valuable and able extensions of the great trigonometrical survey of India, and particularly for his recent triangulation carried on through Rajputana, the Punjab, and the Himalayan Mountains, thereby adding to our geography an accurate and intimate knowledge of a part of the globe most interesting to mankind at large, and of vital importance to Great Britain in particular.

"After detailing the survey, the President of the society, Sir Roderick Impey Murchinson, added: -

"Having determined that of all the mountains whence the affluents of the Ganges run, the loftiest summit is situated about midway along the Himalayan chain, and finding that this culminating point (N. lat. 27 deg. 56 min., E. long. 86 deg. 53 min.) was

29,002 English feet above the sea, and consequently 846 feet loftier than the famous Kunchenging of Nepaul, Colonel Waugh has gratefully and appropriately named this, the highest known elevation in the world, Mount Everest, after his valued geographical instructor. These great results appear to come peculiarly within the scope of the society, which takes for its motto 'Ob Terras Reclusas;' for eight years ago the mere exploration of the tracts in question would have been deemed impracticable; whereas, under the direction of our medallist, a vast portion of these countries is now accurately delineated, on the basis of astronomical observations, connected by the highest appliances of modern geodetical science and art.

"The President then addressed Colonel Everest, and handed to him the medal, requesting him to convey it to Colonel Waugh; to which Colonel Everest appropriately replied on behalf of his esteemed successor in office." □



# nostalgia



This picture taken in 1941, is of the Coronation Bridge (also called the Baghpool) under construction. It was constructed at a cost of Rs. 4 lakhs by Mr. John Chambers who was the last British Executive Engineer of Darjeeling Division PWD. It was so named to mark the coronation of George VI in 1937. On the foreground can be seen the Railway tracks of the train which journeyed up to Geil Khola. The tracks were washed away by the great landslides of 1950.

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